

It is always a delight to me to come to St. Mary's City, this birth-place of our State so richly endowed by geography and history. More than three centuries ago, Father White, the Jesuit Priest who landed here with the first settlers from England, described it as "a spot so charming in its situation that Europe can scarcely show one to surpass it." We are pleased that the beauty and the charm which Father White saw has remained undiminished over the passing years. This indeed is a hallowed spot — a place which quickens the heartbeat of Marylanders as they contemplate the noble and heroic chapters of history which were written here.

Father White described the landing of the first settlers on this shore with these words:

"We took upon our shoulders a great cross which we had hewn out of a tree, and advancing in order to the appointed place, with the assistance of the Governor, and his associates and the other Catholics, we erected a trophy to Christ the Savior, humbly reciting on our bended knees the litanies of the sacred cross with great emotion."

It has here more than three hundred years ago that the foundation of Maryland was laid. It was here that the first laws to govern the colony were passed. It was here that Margaret Brent stood before the General Assembly to petition her right to vote, becoming the first American woman to demand the right of suffrage. It was here that the first American law was passed acclaiming the freedom of religion. May I say to you students of St. Mary's that you enjoy a rare privilege in being able to pursue your studies in such a noble environment.

Just briefly this afternoon, I want to discuss with you some of the plans your state government has for expanding and enriching the educational opportunities of the youth of Maryland. One of the most rewarding experiences of my career as Governor is to have proposed and initiated a program for the enlargement and improvement of our system of public higher education. St. Mary's Seminary Junior College is very much a part of these plans. In fact, it may be said that your college enjoys a unique role in our scheme. The plan advanced by the Commission for the expansion of public higher education (The Curlett Commission), and put into action by the General Assembly and me, has been referred to as the "tripartite" program of higher education. It would perhaps be more accurate to call it a quadripartite, or four-part, program because of the unique condition of St. Mary's Seminary Junior College.

The three parts of the program are these:

1. The continued expansion of the University of Maryland, in-